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ABSTRACT

This action research study was designed to improve the academic performance of students with special needs in two elementary school classrooms in a parochial school setting. Cooperative learning and curriculum modifications were selected as interventions. Cooperative groups were formed which emphasized teamwork and communication with assigned roles to incorporate accountability. A binder of curriculum modifications was developed that included modifications in reading, language arts/English, mathematics, spelling, handwriting, homework, and organizational and memory strategies. Different subject areas were emphasized in each month. Students' academic progress was assessed using anecdotal records, document analysis, and teacher surveys. Results indicated that all students benefited from the modifications that were implemented, not just the targeted population. Modifications were more effectively implemented on a whole class or group rather than individual basis. Appendices include survey and other forms. (Contains 38 references.) (DB)

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ASSISTING LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN A REGULAR CLASSROOM AT A PAROCHIAL SCHOOL

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Abstract

This action research study was designed to improve academic performance in two elementary school classrooms located in Northern Illinois. The study focused on assisting students with special needs in a parochial school setting and was conducted from September 2002 to January 2003. A total of 26 participants (10 students and 16 faculty) were involved in the project.

Among factors influencing the academic success of special needs students are: learning disabilities are more common in regular education settings (Holloway, 2001), lack of teacher training in special education (Coombs-Richardson, 2001), and inclusion programs integrated into the regular education classroom (O'Shea & O'Shea, 1998). According to Burnette (1998), students with learning disabilities especially benefit from peer tutoring and learning in small groups. King-Sears (2001) added that modifications to the general curriculum are needed to effectively teach students with special needs. For these reasons, cooperative learning and curriculum modifications were selected as intervention strategies for the study proposed.

To document students' academic progress the following methods of assessment were used: anecdotal records, document analysis, and teacher surveys. Anecdotal records were designed to document the strengths and weaknesses of student academic performance. Document analysis included a review of existing school records regarding students' school progress. Lastly, a total of two surveys were used to gather data from the faculty. The first survey was centered on general attitudes teachers have towards students. The second survey highlighted teachers' classroom applications.

The results of this study indicated that all students benefited from the modifications that were implemented, not just the targeted population. The modification binder created helped implement new techniques and modifications to help learners in the targeted classrooms. Report cards and higher grades also indicated that these modifications had an impact on students' academic success. Cooperative learning also had a big impact on participants' self-esteem as well as social and communication skills.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND CONTEXT

General Statement of the Problem

Students who are struggling in the targeted setting currently have few school wide sources to support their academic needs. Evidence for the existence of this problem includes observations involving anecdotal records of student's strengths and weaknesses, a document analysis of existing school records, and surveys with teachers.

Immediate Problem Context

Site A is a Lutheran school located in the Midwest with a total school population of 160 students. One hundred-fifty four of the students are Caucasian, four are African-American, and two are Hispanic.

Site B is a Catholic school also located in the Midwest with a total of 296 students. Two hundred-eighty one of the students are Caucasian, seven are Multi-Racial, six are Hispanic, and two are Asian.

Site A is a small school with five grades (a kindergarten, and four multi-age classrooms including a first-second, third-fourth, fifth-sixth, and a seventh-eighth combination). Each teacher is assigned one computer per classroom. Site A does not have a pre-kindergarten problem as well. There is one principal, along with two secretaries and a custodian that forms

the administration and staff. Teachers are required to teach art and gym and there is one music teacher that comes weekly to teach music. There is no library, but there is a gymnasium where students, staff, and teachers eat lunch. The average years of teaching experience among the faculty is 16 years. Two of the teachers have their master's degree and the remaining faculty has a bachelor's degree.

Site B is also smaller school that teaches children in grades P-K through 8. There are thirteen teachers along with a librarian and two classroom aides. There is also a reading teacher who teaches reading in grades first through fourth. There is one principal with one school secretary. There is a library with a computer lab in the school as well as a science room and a lunchroom. The average years of experience among the staff is thirteen years. All of the teachers have a bachelor's degree.

Both sites do not have any special education resources available to help assist their students. Both schools have athletic programs as well as band and choir programs. Both schools are also connected to the church and have two presiding pastors in charge of the church.

The Surrounding Community

Both schools are located in District 300 boundaries. District 300 is a large district that involves a large boundary of towns. In the entire district, 74% of the students are Caucasian, 19% of the students are Hispanic, 4% of the students are African-American, 2.1% of the students are Asian/Pacific Islander, and .5% of the students are Native American. There are a total of 16,116 enrolled in District 300. The attendance rate for the district is 94.5%. The mobility rate is 13.3% while the truancy rate for the district is 1.8%. 10.7% of the students have limited English proficiency. 18.0% of the students come from a low-income environment.

National Context of the Problem

There are many concerns a teacher faces on a daily basis. How to teach children with special needs is a concern every teacher has had to face in his/her career. Inclusion is occurring in more schools and school districts around the country. According to Burnette (1999):

> Today's students with disabilities are receiving reading instruction in a general education classroom instead of a special education classroom. This practice can be expected to increase, since 1997 reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides support for educating students with disabilities in the general education curriculum (p. 1).

With the implementation of inclusion, teachers need to be educated so that they can help those children with special needs. Many teachers feel that this is a problem and that they are not ready or qualified to teach these children.

Bellingsley (1993) in a study by Busch, Espin, and Pederson states, " The attrition rates of teachers in special education are alarmingly high" (p. 96). There are factors that contribute to the above statistic. In the same study, their teacher concluded that, " It would have been helpful for the general education teachers in her school to have had the opportunity to learn more strategies and techniques for inclusion of students with disabilities (p. 96). Their teacher also believed that, "General education teachers wanted to include students with disabilities in their classrooms but did not know how to do so" (p. 96).

Learning disabilities will always be something that is evident in every teacher's classroom. "Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation reported in 1995 that 2.25 million school children

have learning disabilities" (Shaloway, 1998, p. 68). Learning disabilities are a consistent problem in our school system. Shalloway (1998) reported that," In the U.S. population, ten to fifteen percent suffer from learning disabilities, and many probably go undiagnosed" (p. 68). So, as educators, we have to learn to teach so that all of our students can be taught in a way that will benefit them. Learning disabilities does not only affect the elementary schools. Zirkel (2001) stated that," According to the ACE study, 41% of the freshman who reported in 1998 that they had a disability came from the "learning disability" category, compared with 15% in 1998. (p. 640). These were freshman in college. The ACE also found," The proportion of full-time students with disabilities entering college and universities has more than tripled in the past two decades- from less than 3% in 1978 to 9% in 1998" (Zirkel, 2001, p. 640). Students at all different ages are affected by this problem.

CHAPTER 2

PROBLEM DOCUMENTATION

Problem Evidence

In order to document the number of students with special needs in the targeted classrooms, classroom observations, test grades, report cards, teacher/parent conferences, and document analysis over an eight-week period of time were used.

Classroom observations were noted on a form developed by the researchers to aid in data collection (Appendix A). This form was called an anecdotal record and was an on-going process that was used to record students' areas of strengths and weaknesses. Consistent weaknesses were an indication of where the researchers needed to implement modifications and strategies to assist participants' growth.

Test grades were another indicator used to determine areas that need modifications. Both pretests and posttests are given to see if there is an improvement once these modifications were made. Report cards also coincided with test grades. Areas on the report cards that needed improvement were used as benchmarks for researchers' decisions to make modifications.

Prior educational history also played a part in determining which students had special needs to be addressed in the classroom. An document analysis form was developed by the researchers to record prior knowledge of the student (Appendix D). Past standardized test

scores, medical history, discipline issues, and academic and social skills are all part of the document analysis. This helped researchers to understand students' background as they entered the classroom. Parent/teacher conferences were another indicator used by researchers to document what strategies and modifications needed to be implemented in the classroom. These tools enabled researchers to understand the problem and implement strategies to solve the issues faced.

Probable Causes

A review of the literature revealed several causes for having to assist students with special needs in a regular education classroom. According to Klinger and Vaughn (1999), students with learning disabilities are increasingly receiving their education within general education classrooms. Halloway (2001) reported that, "Between 1986 and 1996, the number of students with learning disabilities who were educated in regular classrooms increased by nearly 20 percent, whereas the percentage served in resource rooms or separate classes decreased substantially. (p. 86). Parochial schools do not have special education services so the responsibility lies heavily on the classroom teacher.

Many general education teachers are nervous about including students with disabilities in the general classroom because they lack formal training in dealing with the challenges that are associated with these children (Merritt, 2001). According to Coombs and Richardson and Mead (2001), general education teachers feel that university courses need to focus more on practical knowledge and less on theory to successfully teach all learners in the classroom. These introductory courses do not adequately prepare general educators to work with special educators in adapting the curriculum and assessment strategies.

Another probable cause is the increase of inclusion programs. Smith and Smith (2000) reported that, "Inclusion is not going to go away, and students will continue to be increasingly served in integrated regular classroom" (p. 161). Without special education services, inclusion cannot be successfully implemented.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Literature Review

Cooperative learning, as written by Gillies and Ashman (2000), is an instructional strategy that is now accepted which promotes achievement and learning throughout the entire curriculum (Cohen, 1994). The results of this study show that working in small, structured, cooperative groups greatly benefited children with learning difficulties (2000). Gartner and Lipsky (1997) described different models of instruction using grouping and the positives and negatives of each model (1997). Hobbs and Westling (2000) also suggested that cooperative learning could be very effective in strengthening and modeling areas relative to inclusive education (2002). Hobbs and Westling also feel that as teachers, part of our preparation for an inclusive classroom should involve an emphasis on cooperative learning. Burke (2000) listed many strategies to use in cooperative groups for students with special needs.

Cooperative teaching provides both educators and students alike with more opportunities to reach their full potential (Hourcade & Bauwens, 2001). Johnson and Johnson (1999) stated that there is a considerable amount of evidence that suggest that structured cooperative groups promote more effort to achieve by students. Schniedewind and Davidson (2000) listed several benefits of cooperative learning. Schniedewind and Davidson suggested further that cooperative

learning should personalize student learning, be challenging to each student, promote group work and effort, and help encourage students to appreciate their peers' opinions and experiences.

Swanson (2001) believed not all interventions work equally. There are many types of interventions and finding the right one is important. Quenneville (2001) described the many benefits of using technology also in general education classrooms to assist LD students. Edyburn (2000) stated the fact that the benefits of technology to assist students with mild disabilities are great, but there is little attention (literature) given to the benefits. Burnette (1999) stated that using small groups for reading instruction has shown to be more effective than whole group instruction. Mueller and Fleming (2001) concluded that the teacher plays a crucial role in setting up the conditions for cooperative learning. Cooperative learning promotes learning by encouraging students to cooperate and work together (Kassner, 2002). According to Kassner, there are many advantages to cooperative learning, including: stimulating student thinking, improving student relationships, resolving conflicts, and nurturing behaviors (2002). Tschannen-Moran and Hoy stated, (2000) "Collaborative learning strategies provide a powerful mechanism not only to address affective goals in education but also to enhance students' cognitive development, to deepen their understanding of concepts, and to press them to examine, articulate, and elaborate their ideas with greater clarity and rigor"(p. 159).

The use of technology in assisting students with special needs has evolved and become more prominent in classrooms today. However, Edyburn (2000) stated that little attention is given to the benefits of using "assistive technology" when dealing with learning disabilities. Traditionally, assistive technological devices were used for students with physical handicaps. Behrmann (1994) reported that, "The Tech Act defines A T devices as any item, piece of

equipment, or product system (whether acquired off the shelf, modified, or customized) that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities" (p. 2). These devices include high-tech computers with multimedia software, electronic organizers, as well as the use of calculators, spell checkers, highlighters, highlighting tape, and even pencil grips, which are helpful in note taking, as a communication device, and as a form of assessment (Biegel, 2000).

Accommodations and modifications can be made for students with learning disabilities and struggling students in the general education classroom. Baumel (2000) stressed that accommodations are not meant to change the curriculum. Baumel added that accommodations help the students to learn and express their knowledge. Modifications can be made to cover basic skills in all curriculum areas including reading, language arts, and math (Hammeken, 2000).

Garnett (1998) stated that students with math learning difficulties are seldom referred for special education testing. Therefore, students with learning disabilities are more often receiving their math instruction in the regular education classroom. These students benefit from this instruction if it is modified to meet their individual needs. Lock (1996) suggested that general education teachers can modify their lesson plans, teaching strategies, and adapt their media for instruction and evaluation. Modifications and adaptations are not just appropriate for learning disabled students but are appropriate for all students in the general education classroom. Some simple modifications can include using graph paper to help keep columns straight, using calculators for students to check their work, and reducing the number of problems on an assignment. Lock also suggested displaying charts and graphs, using manipulatives, such as

Cuisenaire rods and Unifix cubes which allows students to visualize number concepts. Using games with dice, spinners and decks of cards can be a fun way to reinforce math concepts. Other tips suggested by Lock include sequencing basic facts and memorization, with new facts being presented a few at a time with continuous repetition and review. Teachers are also encouraged to teach the skills of estimation, so that the student gets into the habit of checking their answers to see if it is sensible and logical (Hodge, 2000).

Dyslexia, one of the most common forms of disabilities, is the difficulty of sounding out letters (Wingert & Kantrowitz, 1997). To assist the dyslexic child with reading, teachers should use books that are appropriate for their reading level, not beyond, to help them develop their self-esteem. Also, introduce new words slowly, use plenty of repetition, and do not pressure the student to read aloud if they do not feel comfortable. Using books on tape is another accommodation to help the dyslexic child, which is an excellent way to explore students to different types of literature that is appropriate for their age level (Podhaski, 2000). Podhaski also stated that using books on tape should be accompanied by effective direct instruction along with the teaching of active listening strategies.

A dyslexic child may have poor auditory short-term memory. To help this student, Hodge (2000) suggested that the classroom teacher could first give an outline, using a graphic organizer of what will be taught in the lesson, and then give a wrap up of what was taught.

Teachers can also write down any messages for the student. Hodge also suggested that teachers can encourage good organizational skills by making sure the student has all homework

assignments written down in an assignment book and help the students learn to use folders and dividers (Hodge, 2000).

Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) teaches students with learning disabilities to use reading comprehension strategies while working cooperatively with others in their general education classrooms (Klinger, Vaughn, 1998). Klinger and Vaughn suggested four strategies as part of the CSR plan. The strategies are "Preview, Click and Clunk, Get the Gist, and Wrap Up" (Klinger & Vaughn, 1998). These strategies were developed to assist students with reading difficulties but were also shown to have positive effects for average and above average achieving students as well.

Dysgraphia, another form of learning disability, is the difficulty with the writing process (Richards, 1999). Students with dysgraphia may appear lazy or unmotivated, have difficulty expressing their ideas in writing, and continually have messy handwriting and papers for no reason at all. Richards (1999) suggested that the reason for dysgraphia is found within the processing system, and these students need to develop compensations and remediation strategies. In order for these strategies to be productive, the teacher must first determine the point of frustration for the student. Some of the compensations and remediation strategies suggested by Richards include observing the student's pressure and angle when writing, having the student use pencil grips, post a handwriting chart on the student's desk and on the wall, and teach by modeling the steps of writing,

In addition to curriculum modifications, there are many general accommodations teachers can make to assist children with special needs. When testing, teachers can allow students to have

open book tests, provide practice questions, give multiple choice questions, allow the student to use a calculator or dictionary, and provide the student with extra time to finish the test (Parent Journal, 1996). Reetz, Ring, and Jacobs (1999) suggested 20 questions that teachers can use as a guide in determining whether or not a test and its modifications are appropriate, These include taking a look at how the test is constructed: true or false, matching, essay, and multiple choice questions. Can the student perform with these types of tests with the use of aids, given extra time or if the questions are adapted? The student may need an alternative assessment, using different documentation methods. Pre-assessment of students' skills using a pretest may also be necessary to determine the need for authentic assessment (Reetz, et al.,1999).

Other accommodations in the classroom involve homework strategies for the struggling student. Warger (2001) suggested giving clear and appropriate assignments, teaching study skills, using a homework calendar or assignment book, and making homework accommodations. Warger added that accommodations such as adjusting the length of the assignment, providing one-on-one assistance or a peer tutor, adjusting the grading scale, and giving fewer assignments can also be helpful. Baumel (2000) also suggested allowing extra credit assignments, giving reminders of due dates for long-term assignments, developing a completed work reward system, and allowing the student to work on homework at school.

The physical arrangement of the classroom is also an important accommodation for students with special needs. Baumel (2000) suggested seating the student near the teacher, have a daily routine posted in the classroom, provide opportunities in the daily schedule for movement around the classroom, and standing near the student when giving direct instruction and directions. Baumel (2000) concluded, "Accommodations aren't intended to take the place of real

learning or instruction in basic skills. Instead, they provide ways for kids with learning differences to take in information or help them express their knowledge (p. 3)."

Project Objectives and Processes

As a result of cooperative learning and curriculum modifications, during the period of September through January 2003, the students of the targeted first through fourth grades will gain academic improvement throughout the school year.

In order to accomplish the project objective, the following processes are necessary:

1. Design materials to assist students with special needs in the targeted regular education classrooms. (Burnhan, 2000: Greenspan, 2001; Hagler, 1999: Hammeken, 2000; King-Sears, 2001; Swanson, 2001; Warger, 2001).
2. Design strategies and models to assist students with special needs in the targeted regular education classrooms (sources same as above)
3. Develop cooperative learning activities that are designed to foster peer-Tutoring and learning from one another (Bellanca & Fogarty, 1991; Burke, 2000; Burnette, 1999; Gartner & Lipsky, 1997).

Project Action Plan

The following plan was designed to implement four major components. The first component is to develop materials. A parent letter was sent out during the beginning of September. Teacher surveys were also administered in the month of September. A document analysis was completed before the beginning of the school year. Anecdotal records were started and continued until January 2003.

The second component was to develop strategies for the following curriculum areas: Math, Reading, Spelling, and Writing. We developed a resource binder that has various modifications and strategies for each of the listed curriculum areas. We spent about a month on each curriculum area and concentrated on implementing the modifications and strategies that we have gathered in our resource binder.

The third component was to implement cooperative learning in the classroom. There were many benefits to this method of learning we used small groups to create reading base groups, teach social skills, and to teach thinking skills. Peer tutoring was also implemented as one of the modifications to help students with special needs. The last part of this component would be to teach how to work in groups and teach them the roles of each person in the group, various methods to get into the groups, encouraging appropriate behavior in the group, and using a listening T-chart to illustrate how a group should sound and act. The fourth component is the assessment.

Methods of Assessment

In order to assess the effects of the interventions we are implementing, we used formal and informal assessment. Formal assessment included pre-tests and post-tests to determine if there was an improvement throughout the learning process. Report card grades also were used as an indication of academic improvement. Conferences and parental communication were implemented during the process to determine strengths and weaknesses of targeted students and any improvements that resulted from implementations executed in the classroom. Informal assessments included classroom observation, and anecdotal records that were ongoing

throughout this project. The anecdotal records were used to keep track of two things. First, to list strengths and weaknesses in academic areas of each targeted student. Secondly, the records were used to keep track of what modifications were used for each child and when the modifications were implemented. This helped us keep track of what modifications were done and when they were done. Classroom observation was a major assessment tool used in this project. Not only were the targeted students observed on a regular basis, the other children were observed to see the benefits as a whole class of our implementations. These were all the assessment tools that were utilized during our project.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of the Intervention

The objective of this project was to assist learners with special needs in a regular education classroom in a parochial school setting. The implementation of cooperative learning and curriculum modifications was chosen to assist targeted students in grades 1-4.

Teacher surveys were administered in September to help the researchers understand the knowledge and frustration of teaching students with special needs. Conclusions from the surveys helped to guide the direction in which the project would proceed (Table 1).

Table 1

Emerging Themes: Teacher Survey Results

	Site A	Site B
Understands the concept of inclusion.	3	7
Feels unprepared to teach students with special needs.	3	6
Feels frustrated when teaching students who struggle with content.	3	5
	(n=4)	(n=8)

N=15

Most of the teachers surveyed believed that they understand the concept of inclusion. However, they feel frustrated, unprepared, and do not know how to best educate their students with special needs.

Cooperative learning was implemented at sites A and B during the months of September through January. Cooperative groups were formed on a daily basis by the classroom teacher. Many social skills were taught, as well as, a heavy emphasis on teamwork and communication within the groups. The classroom teacher also assigned roles to each student to incorporate accountability and to highlight their specific strengths to improve self-esteem. During the project, the roles were changed by the classroom teacher to challenge the students in their areas of weakness. Cooperative learning was used in the following curriculum areas: Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Reading. Lesson within these curriculum areas were modified to incorporate all students' strengths.

Modifications of the curriculum were also incorporated at sites A and B during the months of September through January. Reading modifications were concentrated during the month of September and continued throughout the duration of the project. Next, Language Arts/English modifications were implemented during the month of October along with Math modifications. November focused on modifications in Spelling. December and January ended with handwriting, homework, organizational and memory strategies.

Classroom observations were recorded monthly on an anecdotal record developed by the researchers (Appendix C). The record was used to analyze strengths and weaknesses of the targeted students in both social and academic areas. Progress was also noted on this form.

The modifications implemented were also recorded for each targeted student in the curriculum areas needed. The modifications implemented were then compiled.

Presentation and Analysis of Results

Figure 1 from Site A lists all the modifications that were made in the curriculum for the targeted students in third and fourth grades. Modifications were taken from various resources that were compiled into a resource modification binder.

Math use graph paper, highlight signs, manipulatives, cooperative learning, extended time, multiplication desk charts	**Science** open book tests, read tests and assignments aloud and cut down, note cards, cooperative learning, graphic organizer notebooks, use overhead	**Social Studies** open book tests, use anthology books on tape, read tests and assignments aloud, assignments cut down, draw vocabulary method, highlighting facts
Reading books on tape, computer quizzes with individual goals, modified assignments, different groupings, reading response journal, strategy book marks	**Spelling** modified lists, word wall, rainbow spelling technique, working with words method	**Language Arts/ English** C.O.P.S. strategy, graphic organizers, writers workshop format, highlight parts of speech and punctuation
Handwriting desk charts, mechanical pencils, handwriting paper	**Miscellaneous** preferential seating, use overhead projector with colors, use rubrics, modified grade scale, memory strategies	**Miscellaneous (cont.)** use white board (colors), model thinking strategies, allow extra time, use visuals

Figure 1. Curriculum modifications used at Site A.

Figure 2 from Site B lists all of the modifications that were made in the curriculum for the targeted students in first grade. These modifications were also taken from various resources that were compiled into a resource modification binder.

Math recall methods, concentrated on basic math facts, reduce number of problems, extended time, highlight operation signs	**Science** None	**Social Studies** none
Reading phonics, books on tape, drawing vocabulary method, bookmarks, highlighting, skimming/scanning techniques, extended time on tests, multi-sensory approach	**Spelling** reverse chaining by letter method, trace-copy-recall method, highlight hardest part of word, personal spelling sheet	**Language Arts/ English** color code sentence, graphic organizers, act out vocabulary words
Handwriting extra time, write on every other line, fine motor skills methods, limit amount of copying from book, provide worksheets	**Miscellaneous** following directions strategies, homework strategies, memory strategies, overhead visuals	

Figure 2. Curriculum modifications used at Site B.

Figure 3 compares which modifications were successful at sites A and B. The major differences between the grade levels were in the areas of Science and Social Studies. In first grade, textbooks are not used in these content areas. Instead, literature is used for whole group instruction, discussion, and activities. In third and fourth grades, textbooks are used in these

areas, and therefore, the written and reading assignments needed to be modified for students in the targeted classrooms.

Math highlight operation signs, modified assignments, extended time	**Science** none	**Social Studies** none
Reading books on tape, strategies bookmarks	**Spelling** modified lists	**Language Arts/ English** graphic organizers
Handwriting extra time	**Miscellaneous** memory strategies, use overhead visuals, allow extra time	

Figure 3. A comparison of modifications used at sites A and B.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The researchers found the modifications to be beneficial to the students in the targeted classrooms for grades 1-4. Students' performance as evidenced by report cards and higher grades contributed to this conclusion. Researchers also found that the modifications benefited all students and not just those included in the study. However, it was easier to implement modifications as a whole class or in groups compared to an individual basis. Finding the time to work one on one with a child was a difficult task in large classes. Students targeted or the study sometimes perceived that they were singled out when using the individual modifications given that the rest of the class was doing something different. Recording the modifications used was

also time consuming and difficult. Due to the nature of this study, finding statistical support for the modifications was a challenge. Given this, the researchers wanted only to explore whether or not the modifications made a difference and discovered that did.

Future plans include sharing research findings with the school administrator and faculty members. The researchers also plan to use and share the modifications in a binder and present these findings at a future "in- house" professional development workshop. The researchers found this project very beneficial not only to the targeted students but to all students. It is the hope of the two researchers that when a teacher does not know how to help a child who is struggling, he/she can use the modification binder to help students' succeed. The use of the modifications noted are particularly relevant in this case given that special education services are not available at the targeted parochial school.

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Appendix A
Teacher Survey
Form A

For researcher use only.

Site A _____

Site B _____

Circle one response for each of the following five items.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I understand the concept of inclusion.	1	2	3	4
2. I am prepared to teach students with special needs.	1	2	3	4
3. I am frustrated when teaching students who struggle with content.	1	2	3	4
4. I know how to identify a child with special needs.	1	2	3	4
5. I use a variety of teaching methods to reach all students.	1	2	3	4

Appendix B
Teacher Survey
Form B

For researcher use only.
Site A _____
Site B _____

Please answer the following questions.

1. What suggestions do you have for identifying students with special needs?

2. What teaching methods do you find effective for assisting students with special needs?

3. What modifications to the curriculum do you make for students with special needs?

4. What do you think is needed to assist students with special needs?

5. What professional support do you need to work more effectively with students?

For researcher use only.

Site A _____

Site B _____

Appendix C
Anecdotal Record

Participant #: _____
Grade level: _____

Overall
Strengths:
Weaknesses:

Academic Areas

Math	Reading
Spelling	English/Language Arts
Handwriting	Science
Social Studies	Other

Comments:

Appendix D
Document Analysis

Student participant #: _____
Age: _____
Grade level: _____
Retained? Yes No (If yes, grade/s repeated? _____)

Standardized Tests Scores

Areas Above Range:

Areas Within Range:

Areas Below Range:

Medical History

Academic

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Social Skills

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Discipline Issues

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